STRATTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report

OF

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ending 31st December, 1910.

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February 22nd, 1911.

STRATTON,
NORTH CORNWALL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Stratton Rural Sanitary District.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my annual report of the Stratton Rural Sanitary District for the year 1910.

The district has an area of 53,264 acres and a population of 5008. It is mainly Agricultural in character.

The past year has again been an exceedingly healthy one as my monthly reports testify to. There have been no epidemics and Influenza in the early part of the year was not nearly so prevalent as usual.

Housing Accommodation.

The housing accommodation for the working classes taken as a whole can be considered to be good, but in some of the smaller villages there is considerable room for improvement. This is one of the most difficult questions a Medical Officer of Health has to deal with as he knows, if a house is condemned, that the inmates will have great difficulty in finding another. This difficulty is likely to continue as landlords will not build new cottages knowing full well that they cannot obtain a reasonable return for their money.

A few cases of over-crowding in Grimscott and elsewhere have been reported, and notices served, in most of the cases the nuisance has been abated.

Several houses have been put in better sanitary condition by the owners, after notice had been given. There were no refusals.

Three certificates for water supply to new dwelling houses have been granted.

Workshops.

I have inspected the workshops in the district and found their condition satisfactory.

Milk Supply. The Dairies in the district are not registered but should be. In company with the Sanitary Inspector I have visited them and found them as a rule well kept. There is no veterinary inspection of cows for the detection of Tuberculosis.

Food. There has been no seizure of unsound food or any action taken under the Food and Drugs Acts.

There are five slaughter houses in the district. No arrangements have been made for the inspection of meat. No carcases here have been condemned for Tuberculosis.

There has been one case of Anthrax in a cow, the carcase was burnt and the premises disinfected.

Sewage. There is no sewage disposal in the Rural District.

Drainage. Drainage on the whole is good. A drain was constructed in the village of Grimscott at a cost of £13 5s. 10d., it is a great improvement.

Water Supply. The water supply is good and adequate to the needs of the locality.

Pollution of Rivers. None of the rivers are polluted.

Nuisances. Only a few minor nuisances have been reported. It is desirable that owners of cows should pay more attention to carting away more frequently the refuse from the cow-houses, this especially applies to those cow-houses situated in the villages.

Common Lodging Houses. There are no common lodging houses.

Notification of Births Act. The Notification of Births Act has not been adopted.

Offensive Trades. No offensive trades are carried on.

Schools. The sanitary condition of the Schools is satisfactory. The County Council Medical Inspectors continue to inspect the scholars at the various Schools and from the reports that reach me it would appear that the physique of the scholars is above the average. I am very pleased to report that only one School has had to be closed, namely Poundstock, on account of Influenza for 14 days. This may be regarded as highly satisfactory.

Notifiable Infectious Disease.

Seven cases of Notifiable Infectious Disease were reported against six last year. The cases were Scarlet Fever 2, Diphtheria 2 and Erysipelas 3. The cases of Scarlet Fever occurred in one family in Marhamchurch, those of Diphtheria and Erysipelas were all scattered in different parts of the district. I visited each house with the object of ascertaining the origin of the disease and to give instructions for the prevention of infection. I think the district is to be congratulated, that the cases were so efficiently isolated that in no single instance was there any spread of infection. The infectious disease rate was 1·37 per 1000 of the population comparing with a County rate of 3·05 in the year 1909. This may be considered satisfactory. The zymotic death rate is 0·20, there being one death from Whooping Cough.

Isolation Hospital.

I am pleased to report that the provision of an Isolation Hospital is now being considered by a joint committee of the Stratton Rural and Urban Councils. This long delayed and very necessary piece of work seems to be well within sight.

Tuberculosis.

There were four deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, two more than last year. There were also two deaths from the forms of Tuberculosis. This confirms what I said last year that Tuberculosis seems to be more prevalent in the district than it should be. The high death rate from this disease will continue until the public understands that this is to a great extent a preventible disease. Much more might be done in this direction by the giving of Lectures and distributing pamphlets together with instruction in the Schools in Elementary Hygiene.

Respiratory Diseases other than Tuberculosis.

There were 7 deaths from respiratory diseases other than Tuberculosis, being two more than in the previous year.

Cancer.

There were no deaths from Cancer, an unusual occurrence.

Puerperal Fever.

There were no cases of Puerperal Fever. The Midwives Act is working smoothly. The Stratton Cottage Nursing Association is able to supply all requirements. The labouring classes for whom it is intended would be well advised to take more advantage of this excellent Association.

Inquests.

Six inquests were held, 3 on accidents, 2 on suicides, and 1 on natural causes.

Vaccination. I regret to report that about a third of the children born have not been vaccinated. If parents only realised the risks they were running, they would not, because of a few days discomfort, prevent their children from having the only known safe-guard against the terrible disease of Small Pox.

Births and Deaths. Births numbered 99. 49 males and 50 females, giving a birth rate of 19·73 per 1000 against a County rate of 21·44 in 1909.

Deaths numbered 50. 28 males and 22 females, giving a death rate of 9·78 per 1000. The County death rate in 1909 was 14·58.

The natural increase is 50, the same as last year.

In the previous year in the Stratton Rural area there were 107 births and 57 deaths. The continued decrease in the birth rate is much to be deplored. The very low death rate is however extremely satisfactory.

Infantile Death Rate. There were 8 deaths under one year of age, giving an infantile mortality rate of 80·88 per 1000 births. This is the lowest ever recorded for the district and is extremely gratifying. I believe the rate will continue to decrease.

Rainfall. The mean total Rainfall was 41·99 inches against 32·92 in 1909. This is 6 inches above the average of the last five years.

Printing of M. O. H. Annual Reports. I regret that no notice was taken of my suggestion to have the Annual Reports printed and distributed, a course, which is strongly advised by the Local Government Board and the County Council.

General healthy condition of the District. I think this Report makes it clear that the district continues to maintain that high standard of health for which it has always been renowned.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

DURIE AVERY CHAMBERLAIN,

B.A. (Cantab), M.R.C.S., Eng., L.R.C.P., Lond.

Medical Officer of Health for the Stratton Rural District Council.